

EXHIBIT H



Powell raps Europe on CIA flights

Ex-US Secretary of State Colin Powell has indicated that Europeans are being disingenuous when they deny knowledge of the rendition of terror suspects.

Mr Powell said the recently highlighted practice of moving people to places where they are not covered by US law was neither "new or unknown" to Europe.

A number of countries where flights allegedly stopped have said they were unaware of their land being used.

Talking to the BBC, Mr Powell also described his difficulties over Iraq.

In an interview with Sir David Frost for the BBC World TV channel, he described his disappointment with the failings of US intelligence on Iraq, and his arguments with Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld over the campaign.

'Like Casablanca'

He was speaking after his successor, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, faced tough questioning about the use of rendition during a recent trip to Europe.

She admitted that terror suspects were flown abroad for interrogation, but said this was "a lawful weapon", and denied the prisoners were tortured.

Public opinion worldwide is against us
Colin Powell

She refused to address claims that the CIA runs secret prisons abroad where suspects are interrogated without reference to international law.

But Gen Powell was dismissive of the furore in Europe.

"There's a little bit of the movie Casablanca in this, where, you know, the inspector says 'I'm shocked, shocked that this kind of thing takes place'.

"Well, most of our European friends cannot be shocked that this kind of thing takes place... The fact that we have, over the years, had procedures in place that would deal with people who are

responsible for terrorist activities, or suspected of terrorist activities, and so the thing that is called rendition is not something that is new or unknown to my European friends."

Impression of unilateralism

He accepted that Washington's moral authority was under pressure at the moment.

"The United States is going through a period right now where public opinion world-wide is against us.

"I think that's a function of some of the policies we have followed in recent years with respect to Iraq and in not solving the Middle East's problem and perhaps the way in which we have communicated our views to the rest of the world, we have created an impression that we are unilateralist, we don't care what the rest of the world thinks.

"I don't think it's a fair impression"

Questioned on the evidence held up by the US as proof that Iraq had a weapons of mass destruction programme, he said: "I was deeply disappointed in what the intelligence community had presented to me and to the rest of us, and what really upset me more than anything else was that there were people in the intelligence community that had doubts about some of this sourcing, but those doubts never surfaced up to us."

'Not pleasant'

He also referred to his relationship with Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice-President Dick Cheney - often depicted as icy.

"Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney and I occasionally would have strong differing views on matters. And when that was the case we argued them out, we fought them out, in bureaucratic ways," he said.

"Often maybe Mr Rumsfeld and Vice-President Cheney would take decisions into the president that the rest of us weren't aware of. That did happen, on a number of occasions."

Asked about post-war planning for Iraq, Gen Powell said his state department staff drew up detailed plans, but they were discarded by Mr Rumsfeld's defence department, which was backed by the White House.

"Mr Rumsfeld and I had some serious discussions, of a not pleasant kind, about the use of individuals who could bring expertise to the issue. And it ultimately went into the White House, and the rest is well known."

Sir David Frost's interview with General Colin Powell is shown on Sunday 18 December at 1130GMT and 1930GMT on BBC World TV and at 1430GMT and 2130GMT on BBC News24.

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